

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to clarify the “detecting means” and “detectors,” respectively. Support for the amendment may be found, for example, in original claims 1 and 12, the Abstract, and FIG. 9 of the present application. Additionally, claims 5 and 14-16 have been amended for grammatical and/or formalistic reasons.

Applicant has also amended the title for grammatical reasons. However, Applicant notes that the title was grammatically correct when the present application was filed but was improperly reflected in the subsequent records of the USPTO.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3-11 and 15-16 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates that the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 3-11 and 15-16 allowable but maintains that claims 1-2 and 12-14 are also allowable for the reasons below.

Claim Objection

Claim 12 has been objected to because of insufficient antecedent basis for “the array of detecting switches.” Applicant respectfully traverses this objection for the reasons below.

Applicant has amended the language, “array of detecting means” and “array of detecting switches” in claim 12 to read “array of detectors” so as to maintain proper antecedent basis.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above objection.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2 and 12-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0036161 to Nemoto et al. (Nemoto). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons below.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Nemoto fails to disclose "an array of detecting means, the array of detecting means arranged and configured to detect the presence of more than one semiconductor device in one of the pockets of a supported tray by **contacting** at least one of the semiconductor devices in one of the pockets," as required by amended claim 1. Similarly, Nemoto fails to disclose "an array of detectors, the array of detectors arranged and configured to indicate the presence of more than one semiconductor device in a pocket of the supported tray by **contacting** at least one of the semiconductor devices in the pocket," as required by amended claim 12. Rather, Nemoto discloses an IC detecting sensor 500 (having a light source 501 and photodetector 502) that detects the presence of an IC in an IC carrier 16 based on the obstruction of light (generated by the light source 501) by the IC. Thus, the IC detecting sensor 500 does *not* detect the presence of an IC by **contacting** it. Although light generated by the light source 501 may be incident on the IC, it would be erroneous to interpret such interaction as contacting the IC in view of Applicant's teachings and the plain meaning of "contact." Additionally, to adopt such an interpretation would mean that any object (e.g., the floor) that is illuminated by the light source 501 would be erroneously construed to be in contact with the IC detecting sensor 500.

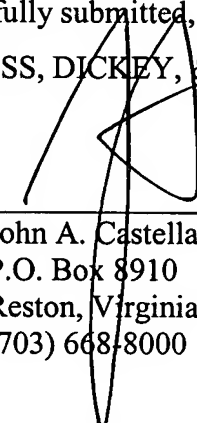
Because Nemoto fails to disclose every element of claims 1 and 12, there can be no anticipation. Consequently, Nemoto will not anticipate claims 2 and 13-14 by virtue of their dependency on claims 1 and 12, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant earnestly solicits reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims. Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
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